

Livestock Care Standards Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Livestock Care Standards Advisory Council (LCSAC) was held on May 8, 2014 in the Extension classroom at 617 Comstock Road in Berlin, VT. The following members were present:

Dr. Kristin Haas (KH); Dr. Ruth Blauwiekel (RB); Diane Bothfeld (DB); Dr. Todd Pritchard (TP); Tracy Simon (TS); Les Pike (LP); Jessica Danyow (JD); Jane Clifford (JC).

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by DB at 9:07 AM.

The following public observers (affiliations) were present:

Joanne Bourbeau (Humane Society of the United States); Carrie Abels (Vermont's Local Banquet; Humaneitarian.org); Jackie Folsom (Co-chair Production and Processing working group, Farm to Plate); unidentified observer.

The February 2014 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as written, following a motion made by RB and seconded by JD.

A legislative wrap up discussion was held. The following was highlighted:

1. The veterinary dentistry bill was signed by the Governor and is effective now
2. S.70, a bill that allows the distribution of raw milk at farmers markets by Tier 2 producers to pre-defined customers, passed the full bodies of the House and Senate
3. The civil forfeiture bill, which shortens the time interval between animal seizure and case completion during animal welfare cases and which creates a mechanism for the towns to collect expenses from owners in instances when the defendant is found guilty, is still moving.

Carrie Abels, editor of Vermont's Local Banquet, a quarterly magazine that covers Vermont's farms and food system, and the founder of Humaneitarian, a website that inspires consumers to purchase meat that's been humanely raised and gives them the tools and information to make informed decisions, presented information to the Council on "Consumer Perspectives on Animal Well-being". As follow up to that presentation, Ms. Abels forwarded additional information as per the request of Council members, including the following:

- Colorado State document comparing humane certification programs:

http://www.extension.org/sites/default/files/Animal%20Certification%20Programs_final_0.pdf

- Animal Welfare Institute's compilation of consumer surveys
https://awionline.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/fa-consumer_perceptionsoffarmwelfare_-112511.pdf

- Company called Azuluna that is/was trying to work with farmers to turn bob calves into rose veal for New England markets: <http://azulunabrands.com/index.html>

Discussion regarding the cattle/calf transport outreach initiative continued. KH, TS and JC updated Council members on the Farm to Plate meeting that was held on April 29, 2014. This was an opportunity for KH and TS to present information to the Production and Processing working group of Farm to Plate regarding this initiative and to discuss with them ways in which they and the Livestock Council could work together to achieve common goals. Pertinent points from that meeting were the following:

- Joe Emenheiser, UVM Diversified Livestock Extension Specialist, would be willing to perform a cost-benefit analysis related to shipping wet calves to slaughter vs. feeding them out for several days or weeks and shipping them as older calves – price of beef is high enough now that the latter may be more profitable for producers, while also achieving the goal of preserving animal well-being.
- There is interest by Farm to Plate of potentially incorporating information that the LCSAC gathers on best management practices associated with calf/cattle shipment in the producer resource guide that they are developing. This collaboration would potentially increase the distribution of materials that the Council puts together.
- Farm to Plate has not set a deadline for when their resource guide will be completed, what format it will take or exactly how it will be disseminated. There is room for collaboration and continued discussion on this front.
- Farm to Plate is interested in staying informed about activities of the LCSAC – KH sent Erica Campbell dates for remaining 2014 LCSAC meetings and will send to her copies of LCSAC meeting minutes going forward.
- There is potential to host additional livestock handling courses around the state, perhaps starting again in early Fall 2014, through a partnership between the LCSAC, Beef Producers Association (Jenn Colby), Farm to Plate and UVM Extension (Joe Emenheiser).
- Information produced by the LCSAC could also be posted on the Farm to Plate Food Atlas.

The Council engaged in a productive discussion about moving this initiative forward. The following action items were agreed upon:

- The Council will pursue sponsorship funding to hire a contractor to compile information pertaining to best management practices for shipping calves/cattle. JD volunteered to draft a sponsorship request letter for review and finalization by the Council no later than July 1, 2014.

- The Council will then engage in a fundraising period of one to two months. The letter can be sent to the following people/organizations with a suggested donation amount of \$250.00:
 - Members of the slaughter/processing industry
 - NOFA
 - Rural Vermont
 - Auction/market owners
 - Livestock dealers/transporters
 - Dairy co-ops
 - Vermont Humane Federation
 - Vermont Veterinary Medical Association
 - Vermont Beef Producers Association
 - Vermont Beef Council
 - Grass Farmers Association
 - Others as determined by Council members
 - Farm to Plate – Jackie Folsom indicated that Farm to Plate may be able to provide funding support if the resulting resources are applicable to producers.

It is possible that Farm to Plate could hold the funding in an existing account until it is utilized to pay for the contractor, printing of materials, dissemination of materials, etc.

- The Council will then hire a contractor to create the deliverables – it was noted that materials created must be of varying levels of detail/complexity to be applicable in multiple contexts (e.g. laminated posters, brochures, one page resource lists, comprehensive pamphlets). Goal completion date was set at December 31, 2014.

A public comment period was held; Carrie Abels provided additional information pertinent to her presentation and Jackie Folsom thanked the Council for the invite to the meeting and requested that the Council keep Farm to Plate apprised of progress on this front.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

